19: Kharuzin -- 62 [2] E-4 (no date) 1898 Yakut
116, 425

The fact of finding gives the right of possession to the finder of the thing found only under the condition that it is res nullius. In the contrary case, he is obliged to return it to the owner. The finder has a right to a reward corresponding to the value of the thing found and to the efforts and expenses involved in the rescue of the object. Concerning the finding of stray cattle it is necessary to inform the persons living in the vicinity; if the owner is not found among them the one should inform his elder. For the concealment of a find the guilty person is sentenced 1) to pay the value of the object; 2) to compensate the owner for the expenses involved in searching for it.

233 reindeer are missing in their own herds. We tried to find out how
422 this was done, but even the Dolgan themselves could not explain it,
but only said that it was so simple because the eye "gets used to"
233 one's own reindeer. [Fig. 17] If a strange reindeer attaches himself
425 to a herd the owner of the herd passes the word along and supports
the reindeer until its owner is found.

233 It must be concluded that the custom of regarding reindeer as
261 private property did not arise so long ago--perhaps even after the
422 Russians came--which can be seen from the following: 1) in summer
the reindeer owned by a rich man are treated as a food supply for
the whole nomadic group in case of insufficiency of wild animals
and birds; in such cases the reindeer are killed without any com-
pensation for the owner; 2) the fact that it is only within the last
few decades that the reindeer has become an object of merchandise.
These questions are considered in greater detail in our work on the
Dolgan clan, and for this reason we shall not dwell on them here.

233 Up to the present time there has existed the custom of rich men
427 lending reindeer "gratis" to poor men, which cannot help leading
to cases of open or hidden exploitation. Usually in the autumn the
nearby poor men descend on a rich person and take reindeer from
him for their needs for a month, for two months, or until spring,
depending on the understanding; and if the borrowed reindeer is
killed by a wolf or dies of a disease, the poor man does not have
to make good the loss, but merely brings the hide from the rein-
deer's leg to the owner. An especially favorable environment for
exploitation is formed when reindeer are lent to a poor man to im-
port government loads: in this case the rich man gives the poor man
several extra reindeer in order that the poor man may import the
alloted load on them, and for this labor the latter is not repaid in
any way, but the money for transporting the goods goes to the owner
of the reindeer. The advantage of such an arrangement becomes
clear when one realizes that under this system the rich man does
not have to hire draymen at his own expense.

233 Besides the "gratis" dispensation of reindeer, there also exists ex-
432 change of reindeer, and--a later phenomenon--selling of reindeer.

437 In exchanging reindeer, A asks B for one of the latter's fine rein-
deer which A likes, offering in return a reindeer which is not equal
in value to B's reindeer, or even a reindeer which is no good at all;
as he does this, A says that later on B will obtain a good reindeer
from him on the same terms. The selling of reindeer is not a fre-
quent occurrence even nowadays among the Dolgan; they buy (that
is, in 1929-1931) a buck for twenty-five or thirty rubles cash, or for